

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SMS-02 SAS-02 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-02 INR-10
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-20
OES-09 SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 NRC-07
/151 W

-----130881 081545Z /46

P 081531Z AUG 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5283

UNCLAS MOSCOW 18742

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS:ENRG, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET OIL SHALE INDUSTRY

REF: LENINGRAD 2125

1. SHALE PLAYS ONLY A MINOR ROLE IN TOTAL SOVIET
ENERGY OUTPUT ACCOUNTING FOR 0.7 PERCENT IN
1970 AND 1975 ON STANDARD FUEL EQUIVALENT BASIS.
PRODUCTION WAS 24.3 AND 34.5 MILLION METRIC TONS,
RESPECTIVELY. LESLIE DIENES IN PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM
SEPT-OCT 1977 PROJECTS SHALE PRODUCTION FOR 1980 AND
1990 AT 44 MMT (15 MT SF) AND 65 MMT (22 MT SF)
RESPECTIVELY; AGAIN, LESS THAN ONE PERCENT OF TOTAL
IN BOTH CASES.

2. IN ESTONIA, HOWEVER, SHALE IS THE MAJOR SOURCE OF
FUEL FOR ELECTRIC POWER. ESTONSKAYA GRES HAS BEEN
OPERATING SINCE 1968 AND PROVIDES 60 PERCENT OF
POWER FOR ESTONIA. ANOTHER SHALE-BURNING PLANT
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ACCOUNTS FOR ANOTHER 30 PERCENT. ESTONSKAYA POWER-
PLANT HAS PRODUCED MORE THAN 170 BILLION KWH OF
ELECTRIC POWER FROM SHALE, FREEING UP THE EQUIVALENT
OF 70 MILLION TONS OF STANDARD FUEL, ACCORDING TO JULY
31 PRAVDA ARTICLE. THIS INDICATES AN ENERGY OUTPUT
OF 2400 KWH/TON COMPARED TO 3100 KWH/TON FOR ONE COAL
BURNING PLANT IN THE U.S., SUGGESTING THAT ESTONIAN

SHALE MAY NOT BE PARTICULARLY RICH FUEL.

3. LATEST EDITION OF VOLUME III OF THE MINERALS YEARBOOK AVAILABLE AT EMBASSY IS 1974. ON OIL SHALE IN U.S.S.R. IT SAYS (P990), QUOTE. MINABLE OIL SHALE RESERVES, CONFINED TO DEPOSITS IN ESTONIA, LENINGRAD OBLAST' AND THE VOLGA REGION, AMOUNTED TO OVER 5 BILLION TONS OF STANDARD FUEL EQUIVALENT (16.7 BILLION TONS). THE LARGEST OIL SHALE RESERVES ARE IN ESTONIA. THE PRODUCTION OF OIL SHALE INCREASED FROM 31.1 MILLION IN 1973 TO AN ESTIMATED 33 MILLION TONS IN 1974. OUTPUT OF OIL SHALE MAY POSSIBLY REACH 34 MILLION TONS IN 1975 AND 38 MILLION TONS IN 1980. OVER TWO-THIRDS OF THE EXTRACTED SHALE IN THE U.S.S.R. IS BURNED AT THE PRIBALTIYSKAY AND ESTONSKAY THERMAL ELECTRIC POWERPLANTS. THE REMAINDER IS PROCESSED INTO FURNACE OIL, GASOLINE, FUEL GAS, PHENOLS, AND AROMATIC HYDRO-CARBONS. OIL SHALE IS ALSO USED IN COMMERCIAL EVERYDAY NEEDS. THE WORLD'S BIGGEST POWERPLANT IN TALLIN FUELLED BY OIL SHALE HAS REACHED A CAPACITY OF 1,600,000 KILOWATS. THE MAIN CENTER OF PRODUCTION AS IN PRIOR YEARS, WAS THE ESTONIAN S.S.R. WHERE OUTPUT TOTALED OVER 27 MILLION TONS IN 1974 AND IS EXPECTED TO BE 28 MILLION TONS IN 1975. THERE WERE EIGHT UNDERGROUND MINES AND FOUR OPEN PITS IN ESTONIA IN OPERATION IN 1974. THE NO. 3 MINE AT KIISA IN THIS REPUBLIC WAS PUT INTO OPERATION IN 1974. INITIAL UNCLASSIFIED

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OUTPUT OF THE MINE WILL BE 1.5 MILLION TONS A YEAR; FULL CAPACITY OF 5 MILLION TONS IS TO BE REACHED IN 1977. UNQUOTE.

4. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS ON OTHER ASPECTS OF PARA 2 OF REFTTEL. TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OILS, INDUSTRY, OIL SHALE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW18742
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780324-0512
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780887/aaaacvkn.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 70220467-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 LENINGRAD 2125
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1805404
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET OIL SHALE INDUSTRY
TAGS: ENRG, UR
To: LENINGRAD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/70220467-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014